

Central Intelligence Agency



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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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U.S. Imports of Soviet Prison-Produced Goods

1. Attached is a list of Soviet industries which, in part, utilize forced labor and produce goods for export. We cannot determine the contribution forced labor makes to either the total output or exports in each industry, nor can we provide a list of brand names or products.

2. We know that, in 1982, about 80 percent of U.S. imports from the USSR were accounted for by metals, chemical and chemical products (mainly ammonia), fertilizers, furs and fur raw materials, and alcoholic beverages. The biggest single item was ammonia--39 percent--which was imported as part of the Occidental-USSR Fertilizer Exchange Agreement, under which the U.S. exports super-phosphoric acid to the USSR.

3. Some of the items we import are probably produced by corrective labor. A Reader's Digest article, for example, gives evidence of Western purchases of prison-made furniture. But the amount of U.S. imports of Soviet goods produced by forced labor cannot be large. Last year U.S. imports from the Soviet Union totalled \$229 million (less than .1 of one percent of total U.S. imports). Corrective labor comprises about three percent of the total Soviet labor force and accounts for only a small proportion of total Soviet production of the listed items; and, presumably, a correspondingly small share of exports. We can assume, therefore, that only a very small proportion of U.S. imports from the USSR consists of prison-produced goods.

Attachment:
as stated

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] of the Soviet Economy Division, Office of Soviet Analysis. Questions and comments are welcome and may be addressed to the Chief, Soviet Economy Division on [redacted]

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Based on [redacted] and open
publications [redacted] CIA has
compiled the following list of industries and products in which
forced labor is used extensively.

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I. Wood Products

- lumber
- furniture
- casings for clocks
- cabinets for radio and TV sets
- wooden chess pieces
- wooden souvenirs
- wooden crates for fruit and vegetables
- cardboard containers

II. Electronic

- cathode ray tube components
- resistors

III. Glass

- camera lenses
- glassware
- chandeliers

IV. Automotive

- auto parts
- wheel rims
- parts for agricultural machinery

V. Mining/Ore Processing

- gold
- iron
- aluminum
- coal and peat
- uranium
- asbestos
- limestone
- construction stone and gravel

VI. Clothing

- coat, gloves, boots
- buttons and zippers

VII. Petroleum Products and Chemicals

VIII. Food

- Tea

IX. Miscellaneous

- brick and tile
- watch parts
- wire fences, mattresses, screens
- steel drums and barrels
- lids for glass jars
- plumbing equipment
- storage battery cases
- concrete products
- electric plugs/cords
- electric heaters
- electric motors
- pumps
- woven bags